

## Memorandum

**To:** DEPUTY DISTRICT DIRECTORS for Planning  
and Public Transportation

**Date:** August 16, 2001

**File:**

Attention: Regional Planning Seniors

**From:** DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
Division of Transportation Planning

**Subject:** District Review and Evaluation of the 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

In February 1999 the California Transportation Commission (CTC) with staff from the Office of Regional and Interagency Planning (ORIP) convened a task force to update the Regional Transportation Planning Guidelines. In December 1999 the CTC, with support from rural and large regional transportation planning agencies adopted the new Guidance. Over 1,000 copies of these Guidelines have been distributed. In addition, the Guidelines are available for downloading from the net.

The URL is <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/Offices/ORIP/RTP/Contents.html>

Shortly after the distribution of the Guidelines, ORIP surveyed all 12 California Department of Transportation (Department) Districts to determine the needs and interest in training associated with the new Guidelines. Based on the feedback received from the districts, the staff from ORIP developed a full-day training program. During the Summer and Fall of 2000 all Districts and a majority of the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs)/Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) attended the training. The training included CTC expectations, environmental issues, and new technology options.

All RTPs are required to be submitted to the Department and the CTC by September 1, 2001 along with a completed checklist found in the Guidelines as Appendix A – Regional Transportation Plan Checklist, Attachment A. This checklist of transportation planning requirements was established as a minimum standard for developing the RTP.

In addition to participation in developing the plans, each Department District also has the lead responsibility to coordinate and complete the Department's review of the RTP and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document. The District is also responsible for preparing the formal Departmental comments on the RTP and its CEQA document. These comment letters should be provided to ORIP upon completion.

The functional responsibilities in the review of these documents may differ from District to District, for instance Regional Planning takes lead on the review of the RTPs but the review of the CEQA document lead coordination may shift to IGR/CEQA or Environmental Branches. It is strongly advised that the regional transportation planner who is familiar with the draft RTP review the CEQA document as well.

The checklist, Attachment A, should be used as the basis for these reviews, however, to assist review we are also providing Key Points for RTP and CEQA document review, Attachment B. This provides some enhanced considerations, particularly in the areas of environmental and air quality concerns. These were compiled from key points developed for the environmental segment of the RTP Training sessions.

ORIP is responsible for preparing the statewide evaluation of all the Regional Transportation Plans as requested by the CTC. The information gathered from the District review of the RTPs will be used for the evaluation report. ORIP staff also continuously monitors the RTPs to assess whether they are updated on a timely basis, to track statewide transportation trends and concerns and air quality conformity issues. ORIP also uses this information to comment on proposed legislation, which would impact RTPs.

In addition to the evaluation of the RTP and CEQA document, each District is responsible for maintaining an adequate number of copies of the RTP, environmental documentation and all other supporting documents. At the statewide level, to assure that Department staff and staff from other Local, State and Federal agencies have access to these documents, ORIP has the responsibility of maintaining complete files of all RTPs, environmental documents and support material, both in the Division of Transportation Planning (DOTP) and the Transportation Library.

ORIP has completed an inventory of the RTPs we currently have on file, Attachment C. All Districts should review the spreadsheet and within two weeks of the date of this letter, send any changes to ORIP. This memo and attachments including this spreadsheet can be downloaded from the ORIP website <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/Offices/ORIP/ORIP.htm>.

When the draft and adopted RTPs, CEQA documentation and all support material are available, please provide three hard copies of the entire package to ORIP along with an electronic copy and District comments on the RTPs and CEQA documents. If you have any questions, please call or e-mail Michelle Gallagher at (916) 653-8766 or [Michelle.Gallagher@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Michelle.Gallagher@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

***Original signed by***

Sharon Scherzinger, Chief  
Office of Regional and Interagency Planning

Attachments